



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE PROBLEM OF LONDON.

By an EX-VESTRYMAN.

HOW to govern London is one of the problems of the hour. How London is governed is one of the things 'no fellow can understand,' and least of all the Londoner himself. There is a popular notion that the Lord Mayor is the head of the government of London; but he is only the head of a little bit of it—a square mile, with the population of a moderate-sized country town and the wealth of a kingdom. The Lord Mayor is popular because he is the great dinner-giver of London, because he rides about in a gilded coach, and because he makes an annual 'Show' of himself on the 9th of November. The Londoner dearly loves a show, even if it paralyses his business for the day and keeps him waiting at the railway station for hours before he can get home. The Lord Mayor is a fetic to him, even if he is not, as the French imagine, a *real* lord, and a more important personage than the Prime Minister or the Lord Chancellor. The French understand a good dinner better than the nice distinctions of English municipal and political life! Time was when the head of the City Corporation was the Lord Mayor, and there was no other; but now he is only one of them, there being Lord Mayors of Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and several other large cities, and three or four Lord Provosts. But the Lord Mayor of London is still a very great personage, and his is a name to conjure with when any great work of charity or philanthropy has to be carried through. That, rather than his municipal position, is what makes the Lord Mayor really and deservedly great.

For purposes of local government, London may roughly be divided into two parts—the City and the Metropolis. The City is one, but the Metropolis is many. There are, in fact, several Londons: as Parliamentary London, Police London, Poor London, Postal London, School Board London, Water London, Gas London, and so forth. The area in each case is probably different, and the police area extends over a district of nearly seven

hundred square miles, including the whole of the county of Middlesex and parts of the counties of Surrey, Kent, Essex, and Hertfordshire. The governing authorities are legion. In addition to the City Corporation there is the London County Council, the Vestries, District Boards, Local Boards—a chaotic jumble, all aiming at the same thing by widely different methods. There are two bodies of police—one municipal, the other imperial. The poor are looked after by no fewer than four different organisations—namely, the Local Government Board, the Boards of Guardians, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. Education, also, is administered by four separate authorities—namely, the School Board, the Industrial and Reformatory Schools, the Poor Law Schools, and the Technical Education Board. There are no fewer than forty-two 'District Councils,' known as Vestries or District Boards of Works; while the rating authorities are probably beyond computation. Contrast this with the city of Edinburgh, which has one supreme Town Council and a single rating authority!

Let it be said at once, in order to clear the ground, that the City proper—that is, the only part of London which has real municipal government—is admirably managed. But it is enormously costly, the Corporation expenditure being eight hundred thousand pounds per annum, and that of the City Commissioners of Sewers four hundred thousand pounds—or a total of twelve hundred thousand pounds! This is a vast expenditure for an area of six hundred and fifty-nine acres, and a *resident* population of little more than thirty thousand. A large proportion of the total amount is absorbed by what may be termed the 'Great Officers' of the Corporation—a retinue more befitting a monarch than a municipality. In addition to the Lord Mayor himself, who receives ten thousand a year, or the same as the Lord Chancellor, there is the Recorder, with four thousand; the Town Clerk, with three thousand five hundred; the Common Serjeant, with three

thousand; the Solicitor, with over two thousand; the Comptroller, Remembrancer, and Chamberlain, with two thousand each; the 'Secondary' (whatever that may be), with fifteen hundred; the Commissioner of Police, with a similar amount; and a host of other functionaries, such as the Sword-Bearer, the Common Crier, the Marshal, two High Bailiffs, a 'Prothonotary,' and a High Steward. These appointments are made by the Court of Aldermen; and there is often keen competition for them amongst the 'sprigs of nobility,' a baronet holding the office of Marshal, and a colonel that of Common Crier, who must not be confounded with the 'bellman' in some towns. What the 'Marshal' finds to do, unless on the occasion of that annual barbarism, the Lord Mayor's Show, it is difficult to imagine, seeing that he is not in charge of the stalwart policemen who regulate the traffic in the more important streets and thoroughfares of the City. Some of the items of expenditure in the Corporation accounts are striking, to say the least. Thus, civil government costs over seventy thousand pounds a year, collection and management of rates considerably over forty thousand pounds, the London Central Markets over a hundred thousand pounds, and Magistracy and police not far short of fifty thousand pounds. Donations, pensions, &c. stand for more than twenty thousand pounds; while educational expenses figure for only fifteen thousand five hundred odd. Rates do not count for much in the City apparently, as it was discovered recently that about thirty thousand pounds had been lost to the Corporation in six years on account of friction between the Commissioners of Sewers and the Board of Guardians, the loss for the past year being no less than *ten thousand pounds*. This is but another example of the evil results of over-much government, or at least of too many governors. But the Commission of Sewers, which was a kind of *imperium in imperio*, has now ceased to exist, and the sewers are likely to be all the purer for that circumstance.

The City is noted for its hospitality, especially to foreigners of distinction, and, in fact, it may be said to be the representative of the whole of London in this respect. The Lord Mayor's banquets have a world-wide reputation, not only as mere feasts, but as occasions on which State secrets are sometimes disclosed and State policy expounded or foreshadowed. The Mansion House, indeed, usurps the place of the Ministerial Bench in this respect; and a Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary will sometimes thaw under the 'loving cup,' when he would only freeze harder under the blandishments of the Front Opposition Bench. But there are occasions when lighter topics engage the Lord Mayor's guests, as when recently the members of the London County Council were of the number, and the chairman of that body referred to a newspaper which had congratulated the Lord Mayor

on his courage in inviting 'a pack of wolves' to his table. It must have been the same paper which suggested that the lion had lain down with the lamb, and the lamb was not inside the lion, as it is confidently predicted it will be one day. The point, however, to be determined is, which is to be the lion and which the lamb—whether the County Council is to 'make a meal' of the City, or the City of the County Council. It is the custom of the Lord Mayor to look in at the Law Courts on his way back from his 'Show,' to receive the congratulations of the Judges, and to invite their Lordships to the banquet in the evening. Last year a startling innovation was introduced, when the Lord Chief-Justice, instead of indulging in the pompous platitudes proper to the occasion, urged his Lordship, in effect, to hurry back to the City and look after the company promoters—à propos, no doubt, of the Hooley disclosures. It was on an occasion of this kind that the late Frank Lockwood, when quite a junior counsel, receiving a nod from the Lord Mayor of the day, translated it into an invitation to the banquet, and remarked, 'Thank you, my Lord. I think I understood your Lordship to say that the hour was seven.' The hour came, but not the man! There are so many comical stories told about these City banquets that one was not at all surprised, on the occasion of the presentation of the sword of honour to the Sirdar, to find one of the great Corporation officials occupying a considerable time in describing to the victorious general the incidents of the battle of Omdurman! The City, indeed, is the great ceremonial, rather than municipal, centre of London, and the Lord Mayor is the great Master of the Ceremonies.

After the Corporation come the City Companies, twelve of which are described as 'Great,' the remaining sixty-five being of no great consequence apparently. The Mercers come first, with a total income of eighty-three thousand pounds; followed closely by the Drapers, with seventy-eight thousand pounds; the Fishmongers, with fifty-two thousand pounds; the Merchant Taylors, with fifty thousand pounds; and so forth. Some of the minor companies—as the Barbers, the Basketmakers, and the Borderers—have no income at all; while the Glass-sellers have as little as twenty-one pounds, and the Leather-sellers as much as twenty thousand pounds. Of some portion of their property the Companies are merely trustees; but of the 'corporate' property they are the sole owners, are not bound to render any account, and may dispose of the income as they please. Some of the Companies are very liberal in their charities, especially in the way of education, and some understand the art of dinner-giving to perfection. Some invite new members to join, others do their utmost to repel, and all resist to the death any attempts to interfere with or curtail their 'ancient privileges.' They have been the object of anxious solicitude on the part of more than one Royal

Commission; and if they had to choose a common motto, it would probably be: 'Long threatened, long live.' But the time is at hand when something will probably be done. To be a member of a Company you need not necessarily have any connection with the trade or calling indicated by its name or title. Thus, a Royal Duke may be a 'Fishmonger' without having anything to do with fish further than eating it; a Prime Minister may be a 'Skinner' without assuming a knife and a leather apron; and a Chancellor of the Exchequer may be a 'Goldsmith' without enriching the national revenue in any shape or form. Some of the Companies bear the names of decayed or dead industries, as Bowyers, Borderers, Fletchers, Girdlers, Horners, Loriners, and so forth; all of them speak of a time when the primitive rather than the practical predominated in the affairs of life. Although the Companies have no official connection with the Corporation, yet, strange to say, they elect, or at least nominate, the Lord Mayor, whose 'Show' they attend in full regalia. Alas! the gaiety of the 'Show' has been sadly eclipsed since Sir John Bennet ceased to attend in his capacity of 'Citizen and Spectacle-maker'—the 'Show' being a function in which 'Spectacle-makers' had a most appropriate place. The members of the Companies are called Liverymen, and besides the head of the Corporation, they elect also certain of its officers; so that it is difficult to see where the 'choice of the citizens' comes in. The Liverymen have a mysterious influence in City affairs, and on a recent occasion it was said that so long as the Companies and the Corporation hung together there would not be much fear of either. To which the wag of the County Council might have replied that they would certainly *hang together*.

Let us now leave the City for the Metropolis. From St Paul's to St Stephen's it is a short three miles, and yet one must traverse as many territories in order to perform the journey. As far as Temple Bar, or rather the Griffin—'that heraldic beast,' as Mr Labouchere once termed it—we are in City territory; thence to Charing Cross we are in the territory of the Strand District Board; and beyond this, in the territory of the Westminster Board of Works. It would be just the same if we proceeded eastward by way of Shoreditch and Bethnal Green, or northward by way of Clerkenwell and Islington, or southward by way of Southwark and Newington. We should see a different set of dust-carts at work in each district, a different set of scavengers, and a different set of paviers—for they are always tearing the streets up in London. The only thing that would be the same would be the police, and that only outside the City. What happens when a crime is perpetrated on the borderland is not clear. The division, and subdivision, and sub-subdivision of London for municipal purposes is about as reasonable as if the Old Town of Edinburgh, say, were governed

by the Corporation of that city, and the New Town by the Parish of Cramond or the Parish of Corstorphine. While the city police would patrol the High Street and the Canongate, the county police would patrol Princes Street and George Street; and the electric light would illumine one side of the town, while gas lamps would render visible the darkness of the other. This is no exaggeration of what takes place in London; and it was only the other day that a correspondent of the *Standard* wrote to inquire whether the Vestry of St George's, Hanover Square, intended to 'light Piccadilly this winter,' or to leave it in the condition of 'disastrous darkness,' which largely accounts for the horde of disreputable characters infesting the street at night. To think of it—Piccadilly, the proud, the peerless, the patrician, sighing for 'more light' at the end of the nineteenth century!

The County Council, which is a kind of aggravated Metropolitan Board of Works, is only an advisory and supervisory authority, except so far as matters general to the whole of London are concerned, such as main roads, main drainage, bridges, embankments, parks, fire brigade, and so forth. It (the Council) has only been a mixed success, and it has suffered much at the hands of its friends, from the Prime Minister downwards. It is a parliament rather than a practical working machine, and, like its near neighbour at St Stephen's, it yields torrents of talk to mere rivulets of work. It is supposed to have a kind of general authority in the City, which is part of the county of London. But the City keeps it at arm's-length; and it was noticed, not so long ago, when the Council sent to the Corporation some resolution or other which had been adopted as regards the rest of London, and which it was thought might be beneficial to the City, the Common Council simply smiled and passed on to the next business. The Vestries are more amenable, but not very much; and they go muddling along much as they did in the bad old days of the Metropolitan Board of Works. In point of numbers they are formidable, more than three thousand Vestrymen being elected to the municipal Vestries, and by the smaller Vestries to the district boards. This army ought to be enough to govern even London, one would think. But in the multitude of Vestrymen there is *not* wisdom; and much time is lost in mere wrangling, and, in the case of one or two Vestries, in something worse—strong language, to wit. It was only the other day that the police had to be called in to remove a recalcitrant Vestryman at Camberwell, who kept the Vestry sitting till nearly midnight by his insubordinate conduct. Poor, dear old Bumble still exists in vestrydom, and not until he is exorcised will any real progress be made in the municipal government of London. Forty governing authorities to four millions of people, with the City thrown in, only gives them a hundred thousand each, or less than one-seventh

of the population of the great city of Glasgow, which is governed by a single authority, and very well governed, too.

Nowhere is the helplessness of the citizens of London more striking than in regard to the water-supply. Neither the Corporation nor the County Council has any control over this, and in this respect they are as backward as the Corporation of 1606, which, although they obtained an Act of Parliament empowering them to supply water to the City, assigned the duty to a private citizen, Hugh Myddelton, who in 1620 received a charter for his New River Company from James I. In the quaint words of the charter, 'because the Mayor, Cominaltie, and Citizens . . . did thereupon forbear at their comon charge to undertake that worke, soe as the same lay long neglected, and unlike by them to be performed.' About a hundred years later the Chelsea Water-works were established, and since then no fewer than seven other companies have been called into existence by the ever-increasing wants of the Metropolis; so that there are *nine* companies doing for London what most other cities do for themselves. All the companies are wealthy corporations, with one object in view—namely, dividends. One of them is so wealthy that its shares can only be bought by millionaires, and, even then, only in little bits, the one hundred and fourth part of a 'king's share' having been sold recently for one thousand pounds!

All the companies have most arbitrary powers; and as regards household supply they charge on the rating, so that the amount paid has no relation whatever to the quantity of water supplied, or whether any is supplied at all. Some years ago the charge was on the total rental; and it was left to a private citizen, who happened to be a barrister, to fight the question, and obtain a decision that the companies were only entitled to charge on the assessment. But even this is a more or less barbarous arrangement, and leads to gross injustice on the one hand, and gross waste on the other. The companies all work independently of each other; so that, as in the recent East End scandal, one part of London may be suffering from water-famine, while the other parts are deluged with supplies. The companies always adopt the *non possumus* attitude on occasions of failure. They begin by denying that there is any scarcity; then they say, if there is, it is due to frost, or drought, or waste, or evaporation, or, in fact, to any cause but the *laches* of the company. The ludicrous element in the recent failure was supplied by the spectacle of thousands of people carrying their water from the stand-pipes in the streets, in cans and pots supplied by the Vestries, or receiving it from carts which perambulated the streets. This at the end of the nineteenth century, in a city of four million inhabitants! The tragic element was supplied when the Bishop of Stepney had to go half a

mile to get a glass of water for a dying woman. Nor is the water at any time of the best, being taken for the most part from the Thames and Lea, both of which are more or less polluted, the Lea rather more than less. But one would imagine, from some of the evidence given before Royal Commissions, that bacteria and germs in water were rather beneficial than otherwise. Perhaps that is the reason why, at this time of day, the authorities are still debating whether London should do what most other great cities and some small ones have long ago done—go to the hills and the valleys for water. The companies say they shall not go, nor will they sell themselves to the County Council, whose members the chairman of the East London Company has described as the 'Jack Cades of the nineteenth century.'

Gas is only less important than water, and here, also, the citizens of London are at the mercy of companies whose main object is dividends. At one time there were several companies, so that there was a show, at least, of competition. Now there are practically only two, and an unregulated monopoly, with powers only less arbitrary than those of the water companies, is in full swing all over London. The quality of London gas is well known, but the price is not so easily determined; and it was only in the last session of Parliament that complaint was made that the price on one side of the Thames was higher than that on the other, although the conditions of manufacture, one would think, must be the same on both sides. Surely the manufacture and sale of gas, in which some municipalities earn considerable profits which go in reduction of rates, is a matter more germane to the functions of the County Council than the working of tramways. The city of Glasgow has a gas revenue considerably in excess of six hundred thousand pounds, and an electric light revenue of thirty-six thousand pounds besides. But London cares for none of these things apparently.

The social aspects of London life are equally neglected with other things under the present régime. Overcrowding, the ghastly bane of modern communities, prevails everywhere—overcrowding, not simply of areas, but of houses, of streets, of railways, and, in fact, of every species of locomotion. In an 'overcrowded' map of London, contained in Mr Frederick Whelen's most excellent work on *London Government*, the districts around the City—Holborn, Clerkenwell, St Luke's, Whitechapel, and St George's in the East—are all coloured a deep black, so that the greatest poverty surrounds the greatest wealth. Here, surely, is a field for the surplus energies and the surplus funds of the City Companies, which would yield a more blessed reward than the giving of costly banquets to persons of the highest consideration and of no consideration. The *Daily News*, under the heading of 'No Room to Live,' has recently published a series of articles on overcrowded

London, showing that one-fifth of the population—that is, not far short of a million—is living under conditions disastrous alike to health and to morals. Overcrowding in the streets is also a serious evil, as well as a great commercial loss to the City. Charles Lamb once said, in a moment of ecstasy with London life: ‘I often shed tears in the motley Strand, from fullness of joy at so much life.’ What would he say to-day, when the omnibuses have been interdicted from stopping at certain historical landmarks, and waiting cabs and sandwich-men have been ordered off the streets from the sheer necessities of the ever-increasing traffic? And what would Dr Johnson’s opinion be of a ‘walk down Fleet Street’ in this year of grace 1899, on the afternoon, say, of the Boat Race day? We all admire the efforts of the stalwart policemen who regulate the traffic in the streets. Do we ever consider that it would be better to *prevent* blocks of traffic than to regulate them; better to direct ‘through’ traffic into one channel *at the start*, and ‘pick-up’ traffic into another, so that each might pursue its separate course unhindered by the other? Your London wagoner is a very conservative gentleman; and, rather than take a new route, he would stand blocked in the old one for hours. The comparative quiet of the Thames Embankment to this day is the best evidence of that.

Sir John Wolfe Barry, the eminent engineer, and chairman of the Council of the Society of Arts, read a paper recently, in which he advocated the construction of great arterial thoroughfares from east to west and from south to north, on a comprehensive plan, and with due regard to the needs of the future. He claimed no originality for the idea, but pointed out that such a plan was laid down by Sir Christopher Wren, and published in 1724, for the renovation of the City after the Great Fire of London. But it fell aside, no doubt from the fact that then, as now, Metropolitan London was without any authority able or willing to deal with the subject. The block on the suburban railways has become so much a matter of course that one newspaper has a permanent heading, ‘The Rush to the City;’ while accidents are reported daily from overcrowding both of carriages and platforms. The managers say they cannot run any more trains in the morning and evening with due regard to safety, and it must come to this one day, that the hours of business in the City will have to be lengthened, and the employes work in relays, so as to spread the hours of travelling over a longer time. The postmen cannot get to their work in the early morning (5 A.M.) from want of trains on the underground lines, and the managers say they cannot put on any more, as there would be no time in which to effect repairs to the line. The rails even now never get ‘cool;’ and as for the tunnels, they are never clear of steam and foul air. The *Spectator*

looks forward to the time when water and electricity will replace steam, and when industries will move into the country, and so relieve the pressure in London. It would even go the length of building schools in the country, and sending children out by train to them. But that is surely a dream, although the transfer of industries to the country would take many children there too, and is not only practicable but highly desirable. The printing and publishing industries have, in fact, already taken an important step in this direction.

What is to be the future of London government? In 1895 what is known as the Unification Commission was appointed, its instructions being to consider ‘the proper conditions under which the amalgamation of the City and County of London can be effected, and to make specific and practical proposals for that purpose.’ Briefly stated, the Commission recommended that the City Corporation should take the place of the County Council, and should rule over the whole of London—the present ‘City’ being styled in future the ‘Old City’ for the purposes of local government. It was seen from the first that this would never do, and even the City authorities themselves did not like it, their representative and witnesses retiring from the commission at a comparatively early stage. So much for ‘unification,’ which was practically dropped as soon as proposed. Since then a ‘tenification’ proposal has been put forward, which is understood to be supported by Mr Chamberlain, probably because a tenth of the population of London would about represent the population of Birmingham, of which he has been Mayor and is still a resident. More recently a ‘fortification’ party has come to the front, which simply means a continuance of the present system, under which London is cut up into little bits for the gratification and glory of vestrydom. To the lay mind, uninfluenced by local interests and unhampered by tradition, the matter seems simple enough. One London is too few; ten Londons are too many; forty Londons are simply the Vestries over again, with the presiding officer designated as Mayor instead of chairman. Forty mayors and—forty beadles. Heaven forefend!

As an alternative to these proposals, let us propose—(1) the City of London as at present constituted, with the addition of all the East End and River-side districts, *where the wealth of the City is earned*, and of Clerkenwell and Holborn, which are contiguous to the City boundary; (2) the City of Westminster, to include the whole of what is known as the ‘West End,’ and with Battersea added as a counterpoise to the wealth of Belgravia; (3) the Borough of London North (or Islington, if preferred); and (4) the Borough of London South (or Lambeth, if preferred). This would practically take the heart out of London; and as the population of each of the divisions would hardly exceed a million, they could not be considered too large, in view of

the fact that Glasgow, with a population of three quarters of a million, and a total revenue of nearly two and a quarter millions, is managed both with ease and efficiency by a single governing authority. The aldermen of the several divisions might form a County Council for matters common to the whole of London, with the Lord Mayor of the City as chairman. An outer ring of Vestries might deal with the outlying suburbs, under the control of the County Council. If this is considered too simple, the next best plan would probably be to found municipalities on the Parliamentary divisions, although this would be somewhat in excess of the proposal for 'tenification.' Having regard to the fact that the total cost of London local government is represented by the enormous sum of *thirteen millions* annually, and that the total metropolitan debt is upwards of forty millions sterling, or about ten pounds per head of the population, the importance of efficient and economical government is too urgent to be much longer neglected.

Londoners, as has been said, know little of the way in which they are governed, and care less. Only the other day the *Spectator* said that there are times when the indifference of Londoners to the way in which they are governed made it almost despair of improvement. Their business interests lie in one quarter, their home interests in another; and such a thing as combination is practically unknown amongst them, else they had long ago combined against the water tyranny. They may live in the same house for half their lives, and never know the name even of their next-door neighbour. They are a long-suffering, law-abiding class, and put up with indignities and inconveniences which the

dwellers in the smallest of well-regulated communities would not endure for a moment. If their nights are made hideous by the howling of a neighbour's dog, the magistrate tells them to start a dog of their own and howl the other down; or, if their mornings are made miserable by the crowing of a neighbour's cock, they are told by the same unimpeachable authority that they belong to the 'noble army of faddists who are the spoilt darlings of the nation,' and that they are unable to realise the delights of the 'natural sounds of animal life.' What they endure at the hands of the railway companies is beyond all calculation, and a large portion of their day is wasted in getting to and from their business, if it be in the City, as it mostly is. Social conditions are getting worse every day; and the time dreamed of by Mr Frederic Harrison, when the population shall be reduced to two millions, and when the Thames shall 'run as clear as it did in the days of old,' is receding instead of approaching. What London will be fifty, or even twenty-five, years hence who can tell, especially when it is remembered that in 1801 the population was *less than a million*? Old Blucher said of London, a good many years ago, 'What a city to sack!' If he were to come back to-day he would probably say, 'What a city to starve!' For it is one of the problems of London how the city would be fed if our grain ships were blockaded at the mouth of the Thames or harried on the high seas. Another problem is: What would become of the law-abiding population if the bottled-up forces of Anarchy and revolutionary Socialism, at present under the surface, were to discover their strength, and, at the same time, the weakness of a divided and too widely distributed police force?

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XV.



WHY he should have been so surprised at meeting Maas on board the steamer that evening Browne has never been able to understand. The fact, however, remains that he was surprised, and unpleasantly so.

The truth of the matter was, he wanted to be alone, to think of Katherine and of the work he had pledged himself to accomplish. Even when one is head over ears in love, however, the common usages of society may claim some moderate share of attention; and, all things considered, civility to one's friends is perhaps the first of these. For this reason Browne paced the deck with Maas, watching the lights of Calais growing smaller each time they turned their faces towards the stern of the vessel. Every turn of the paddle-wheels seemed to be taking Katherine

farther and farther from him; and yet, was he not travelling to England on her errand, was he not wearing a ring she had given him upon his finger, and was not the memory of her face continually with him? Maas noticed that he was unusually quiet and preoccupied, and attempted to rally him upon the subject. He was the possessor of a peculiarly ingratiating manner; and, much to his own surprise, Browne found himself, before they had been very long on board, telling him the news that was destined to sorely trouble the hearts of mothers with marriageable daughters before the next few weeks were out.

'I am sure I congratulate you most heartily, my dear fellow,' said Maas, with a fine show of enthusiasm. 'I have had my suspicions that something of the kind was in the air for some considerable time past; but I did not know that

it was quite so near at hand. I trust we shall soon be permitted the honour of making the young lady's acquaintance.'

'I am afraid that will not be for some considerable time to come,' Browne replied.

'How so?' asked Maas. 'What are you going to do?'

'As I told you the other day, I am thinking of leaving England on a rather extended yachting cruise to the Farther East.'

'Ah, I remember you did say something about it,' Maas continued. 'Your *fiancée* will accompany you, of course?'

Browne scarcely knew what reply to offer to this speech. He had no desire to allow Maas to suspect his secret, and at the same time his conscience would not permit him to tell a deliberate untruth. Suddenly he saw a way out of his difficulty.

'We shall meet in Japan, in all probability,' he answered; 'but she will not go out with me.'

'What a pity!' said Maas, who had suddenly become very interested in what his companion was saying to him. 'There is no place like a yacht, I think, at such a time. I do not, of course, speak from experience; I should imagine, however, that the rippling of the water alongside, and the quiet of the deck at night, would be eminently conducive to love-making.'

To this speech Browne offered no reply. The train of thought it conjured up was too pleasant, and at the same time too sacred, to be shared with any one else. He was picturing the yacht making her way across a phosphorescent sea, with the brilliant tropic stars shining overhead, and Katherine by his side, the only sound to be heard being the steady pulsation of the screw and the gentle ripple of the water alongside.

At last the lights of Dover were to be distinctly seen ahead. The passage had not been altogether a smooth one, and for this reason the decks did not contain as many passengers as usual. Now, however, the latter were beginning to appear again, getting their luggage together and preparing for going ashore, with that bustle that usually characterises the last ten minutes on board a Channel steamer. Always an amusing and interesting companion, Maas on this particular occasion exerted himself to the utmost to please. By the time they reached Charing Cross, Browne had to admit to himself that he had never had a more enjoyable journey. The time had slipped by so quickly and so pleasantly that he had been permitted no opportunity of feeling lonely.

'I hope I shall see you again before you go,' said Maas as they stood together in the courtyard of the station on the lookout for Browne's hansom, which was awaiting its turn to pull up at the steps. 'When do you think you will be starting?'

'That is more than I can tell you,' said Browne. 'I have a great many arrangements

to make before I can think about going. However, I am certain to drop across you somewhere. In the meantime, can I give you a lift?'

'No, thank you,' said Maas. 'I shall take a cab and look in at the club before I go home. I could not sleep until I had heard the news of the town; who has married who, and who has run away with somebody else. Now, here is your cab; so let me wish you good-night. Many thanks for your society.'

Before Browne went to bed that night he ascended to his magnificent picture gallery, the same which had been the pride and glory of his father's heart, and, turning up the electric light, examined a picture which had lately been hung at the farther end. It was a Norwegian subject, and represented the mountains overlooking the little landlocked harbour of Merok. How much had happened since he had last looked upon that scene, and what a vital change that chance-meeting had brought about in his life! It seemed scarcely believable, and yet how true it all was! And some day, if all went well, Katherine would stand in the selfsame hall looking upon the same picture, mistress of the beautiful house and all it contained. Before that consummation could be brought about, however, they had a difficult piece of work to do. And what would happen supposing he should never return? What if he should fall into the hands of the Russian Government? That such a fate might befall him was far from being unlikely, and it would behove him to take all precautions in case it should occur. In his own mind he knew exactly what those precautions would be. Waking from the day-dream into which he had fallen, he glanced once more at the picture, and then, with a little sigh for he knew not what, made his way to his bedroom and retired to rest. Next morning he was up betimes, and by nine o'clock had telegraphed to Southampton for the captain of his yacht. At ten o'clock he ordered his hansom and drove to his lawyers' office in Chancery Lane. The senior partner had that moment arrived, so the clerk informed him.

'If you will be kind enough to step this way, sir,' the youth continued, 'I will conduct you to him.'

Browne did as he was requested, and followed him down a passage to a room at the farther end. Browne's visits were red-letter days in the calendar of the firm. When the lad returned to his high stool in the office it was to wonder how he would spend his time if he were the possessor of such enormous wealth. It is questionable whether he would have considered Browne so fortunate had he been made acquainted with all the circumstances of the case. He was an irreproachable youth in every way, who during the week wore a respectable black coat and top-hat, and lived at Blackheath; while on Sundays he rode a tandem bicycle with the girl of his heart,

and dreamt of the cottage they were to share together directly the firm could be persuaded to make the salary on which it was to be supported a little more elastic.

'How do you do, my dear Mr Browne?' inquired the lawyer, rising from his chair as Browne entered, and extending his hand. 'I understood you were in Paris.'

'I returned last night,' said Browne. 'I came up early because I want to see you on rather important business.'

'I am always at your service,' replied the lawyer, bringing forward a chair for Browne's use. 'I hope you are not very much worried.'

'As a matter of fact, Bretherton, I have come to see you because at last I am going to follow your advice, and—well, the long and the short of it is, I am going to be married!'

The lawyer almost jumped from his chair in surprise. 'I am delighted to hear it,' he answered. 'As I have so often said, I feel sure you could not do a wiser thing. I have not the pleasure of knowing Miss Verney; nevertheless'—

Browne held up his hand in expostulation. 'My dear fellow,' he said, with a laugh, 'you are on the wrong scent altogether. What on earth makes you think I am going to marry Miss Verney? I never had any such notion.'

The lawyer's face was a study in bewilderment. 'But I certainly understood,' he began, 'that'—

'So have a great many other people,' said Browne. 'But I can assure you it is not the case. The lady I am going to marry is a Russian.'

'Ah, to be sure,' continued the lawyer. 'Now I come to think of it, I remember that my wife pointed out to me in some ladies' paper that the Princess Volgourouki was one of your yachting party at Cowes last summer.'

'Not the Princess either,' said Browne. 'You seem bent upon getting upon the wrong tack. My *fiancée* is not a millionairess; her name is Petrovitch. She is an orphan, an artist, and has an income of about three hundred pounds a year.'

The lawyer was unmistakably shocked and disappointed. He had hoped to be able to go home that night and inform his wife that he was the first to hear of the approaching marriage of his great client with some well-known beautiful aristocrat or heiress. Now to find that he was going to espouse a girl who was not only unknown to the great world, but was quite lacking in wealth, was a disappointment almost too great to be borne. It almost seemed as if Browne had offered him a personal affront; for, although his client was, in most respects, an easy-going young man, still the lawyer was very well aware that there were times when he could be as obstinate as any other man. For this reason he held his tongue, and contented himself with bowing and drawing a sheet of notepaper

towards him. Then, taking up a pen, he inquired in what way he could be of service.

'The fact of the matter is, Bretherton,' the other began, 'I have a communication to make to you which I scarcely know how to enter upon. The worst of it is that, for very many reasons, I cannot tell you anything definite. You must fill in the blanks according to your own taste and fancy; and, according to how much you can understand, you can advise me as to the best course for me to pursue.'

He paused for a moment, and during the interval the lawyer withdrew his glasses from his nose, polished them, and replaced them. Having done so, he placed his finger-tips together, and, looking at Browne over them, waited for him to proceed.

'The fact of the matter is,' said the latter, 'before I marry I have pledged myself to the accomplishment of a certain work, the nature of which I cannot explain—I have given my word that I will reveal nothing. However, the fact remains that it will take me into some rather strange quarters for a time; and for this reason it is just possible that I—well, that you may never see me again.'

'My dear Mr Browne,' said the lawyer, aghast with surprise, 'you astonish me more than I can say. Can it be that you are running such risk of your own free-will? I cannot believe that you are serious.'

'But I am,' Browne replied; 'perfectly serious.'

'But have you considered everything? Think what this may mean, not only to the young lady you are about to marry, but to all your friends.'

'I have considered everything,' said Browne.

The lawyer was, however, by no means satisfied. 'But, my dear sir,' he continued, 'is there no way in which you can get out of it?'

'Not one,' said Browne. 'I have given the matter my earnest attention, and have pledged myself to carry it out. No argument will move me. What I want you to do is to make my will to suit the exigencies of the case.'

'Perhaps it would not be troubling you too much to let me know of what they consist,' said the lawyer, whose professional ideas were altogether shocked by such unusual—he almost thought insane—behaviour.

'Well, to put it in a few words,' said Browne, 'I want you to arrange that, in the event of anything happening to me, all of which I am possessed, with the exception of such specific bequests as those of which you are aware, shall pass to the lady whom I would have made my wife had I not died. Do you understand?'

'I understand,' said the lawyer; 'and if you will furnish me with the particulars I will have a fresh will drawn up. But I confess to you I do not approve of the step you are taking.'

'I am sorry for that,' Browne replied. 'But if

you were in my place I fancy you would act as I am doing.' Having said this, he gave the lawyer the particulars he required; and when he left the office a quarter of an hour or so later he had made Katherine Petrovitch the inheritor of the greater part of his enormous wealth. Whatever should happen to him within the next few months she would at least be provided for. From his lawyer's office he drove to his bank to deposit certain papers; then to his tailor; and finally back to his own house in Park Lane, where he hoped and expected to find the captain of his yacht awaiting him. He was not disappointed. Captain Mason had just arrived, and was in the library at that moment. The latter was not of the usual yachting type. He was

short and stout, possessed an unusually red face, which was still further ornamented by a fringe of beard below his chin; he had been at sea, man and boy, all his life, and had no sympathy with his brother-skippers who had picked up their business in the Channel, and whose longest cruise had been to the Mediterranean and back; he had been in old Browne's employ for ten years, and in that of his son after him. What was more, he had earned the trust and esteem of all with whom he was brought in contact; and when Browne opened the door and found that smiling, cheerful face confronting him, he derived a feeling of greater satisfaction from it than he had done from anything for some considerable time past.

WHO ABOLISHED FLOGGING IN THE ARMY?



ALTHOUGH it was not until the Army Act of 1881 became law that flogging in the British army was formally abolished, the death-knell of the barbarous practice was set ringing thirty-four years previously.

An incident then occurred which—chiefly through the medium of the press—was brought to light, and produced not only considerable commotion, but caused a revulsion in public opinion and sentiment on this question. Frederick John White, a private in the Seventh Hussars, one May-day in the year 1846, in a hasty moment, suddenly assaulted his sergeant at Hounslow Barracks. This brought him before the district court-martial, and he was sentenced to receive one hundred and fifty lashes on the bare back. Even in those days, when soldiers were severely flogged for the most trivial breaches of discipline, the punishment was not only cruel, but altogether out of proportion to the offence committed. But, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, the sentence stood irrevocable. So, on the 15th June of the said year, two regimental farriers carried out the sentence with the cat-o'-nine-tails. White was a smart soldier, strong, and well set-up; and, notwithstanding the fact that he had been kept without food for seventeen hours previously, he bore the torture manfully; the colonel and the surgeon of the regiment looking on meanwhile. Swish! swish! swish! fell the blows, until, by the time the full tale was told, the poor victim's back was terribly lacerated and running with blood. When all was over he dragged his weak, bleeding, and pain-stricken body to the station hospital. Here his first request was for a jug of tea to quench his feverish thirst; but—and be it said with shame—this reasonable and natural request was refused by the sergeant. On being examined by the doctor, it was discovered that between the shoulder-blades there was a wound

about six inches long and from four to five inches wide; and the ward-book was noted to the effect that White had been 'severely punished from the neck to the loins.' The usual treatment in such cases was adopted, such as hot fomentations and the application of lead ointment; but in a few days boils began to appear on the patient's back; a little while later he complained of pain in the right side; still later symptoms of pleurisy and pneumonia manifested themselves, and then paralysis of the lower extremities supervened. Hereupon he was moved from the surgical side to the medical side of the hospital, where he died on the morning of the 11th July 1846.

This was an unfortunate and serious sequel; and the regimental authorities thought so too, inasmuch as the colonel and the doctor reported the case to the Director-General of the Army Medical Department. Sir James M'Grigor, the Director, evidently thought that it would be a grave reflection on all concerned if the idea should get wind that a soldier had died in the hospital as the result of a flogging; so he instructed a first-class staff-surgeon to proceed to Hounslow, and, if necessary, to hold a post-mortem examination. An examination was duly made, and the report of the three surgeons engaged was as follows: 'Having made a careful post-mortem examination of Private Frederick White of the Seventh Hussars, we are of opinion that he died from inflammation of the pleura and of the membrane of the heart; and we are further of opinion that the cause of death was in no wise connected with the corporal punishment he received on the 15th June last.'

So far, so good. Arrangements had now to be made for the burial. These were left to the regimental sergeant-major, who, armed with the certificate of death, set off to see the vicar of Heston, in whose parish the barracks were situated. The sergeant happened to say incidentally that the death was the result of liver com-

plaint. 'That's very strange,' said the Rev. H. S. Trimmer, the vicar. 'According to the certificate, the cause of death was inflammation of the heart—a totally different thing.' The sergeant was taken quite aback; and, in answer to the vicar's further inquiries, frankly admitted that Private White had been flogged a few weeks previously. 'Then,' said Mr Trimmer, 'in the circumstances, I shall refuse to allow the body to be buried without an order from the coroner.' The coroner was communicated with, and on the 15th July the first inquiry was held. The evidence, although of a conflicting nature, was nevertheless very damaging to the military authorities; and the jury did not disguise their abhorrence of the transaction, or their sympathy with the victim. Brushing to one side the post-mortem already held, they desired that a further examination by an independent medical man should be made. An Isleworth doctor was deputed to undertake this, and meanwhile the inquiry was adjourned. On the 20th of the month the jury met to receive the doctor's report. It was discovered, however, that he had only made a partial examination, having neglected to examine the back and spine of the deceased. The coroner and jury were not to be beaten. The latter requested the coroner to appoint a London surgeon of eminence in no way connected with the case, and, if possible, ignorant of the circumstances, to make an exhaustive examination of the body. The coroner's choice fell on Dr Erasmus Wilson (afterwards Sir Erasmus Wilson). Dr Wilson was only thirty-seven years of age at the time; but even then he occupied a high position in the profession. He was consulting surgeon to the St Pancras Infirmary, lecturer on anatomy and physiology at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School, and had written standard works on these two subjects and on cutaneous diseases; so that he was eminently qualified to undertake the task. At the third inquiry, held on the 3d of August, the

whole of the evidence was complete, and the report of Dr Erasmus Wilson was submitted. His opinion was that Frederick John White would have been living had not the punishment been inflicted. He had no doubt whatever on this point. In the face of so conclusive a report from such an eminent and reliable authority, the jury had no hesitation in finding a verdict; and although it is somewhat verbose, it is worth recording once more. It ran as follows:


That on July 11, 1846, the deceased, Frederick John White, died from the mortal effects of a severe and cruel flogging of one hundred and fifty lashes, which he received with certain whips, on the 15th day of June 1846, at the Cavalry Barracks, Hounslow Heath, at Heston, and that the said flogging was inflicted upon him under a sentence passed by a district court-martial composed of officers of the Seventh Regiment of Hussars, duly constituted for his trial. That the said court-martial was authorised by law to pass the said severe and cruel sentence, and that the said flogging was inflicted upon the back and neck of the said Frederick John White by two farriers in the presence of John James Whyte, the Lieutenant-Colonel, and James Law Warren, the surgeon, of the said regiment, and that so and by means of the said flogging the death of the said Frederick John White was caused.

Immediately on the promulgation of this verdict, with the added rider calling upon every man in the kingdom to join hand and heart in forwarding petitions to the legislature praying in the most urgent terms for the abolition of the disgraceful practice of flogging, several important modifications in this method of punishment were introduced, until, as we have seen, it was finally abolished.

We shall not be far wrong, therefore, in concluding that if the name of Captain John Brown of Harper's Ferry stands in the popular judgment for the abolition of slavery in America, so ought the name of Private Frederick John White of the Seventh Hussars to stand for the abolition of military flogging in Britain.

ONLY A DOG: AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

PART II.

T the time I am now speaking of I was finishing up a bit of ground on a rush at the back of the Yackandandah, towards what I see they now call on the maps the Kiewa Creek, and I had a touch of the Gippsland fever, like my neighbours. I had got acquainted with a chap of the name of Tom Lawrence; he camped close by me in a little single tent the same as mine; he was regularly stone-broke, clean out of luck. He seemed a very decent sort of chap, a good bit older than I was; he had been to sea and travelled a lot, so he could spin a simple native lad like me all sorts of interesting yarns about foreign countries and things he

had done and seen there. He was mad about Gippsland too, and when we got a bit more intimate he let out that he had a great secret about that part. In some way which was never very clear to me, he said he had got hold of the bearings of a gully right in the heart of the ranges, where some prospectors had got most wonderful prospects—that all their rations were done, and they were nearly starved out when they struck the gold, and couldn't stop. They got bashed on their way back, and had all died except one man, who, I suppose, was kept alive on purpose to tell Lawrence all about the place.

'He was only waiting to make a bit of a rise and get a good mate to start off to this new El

Dorado; he was quite sure he could find it; and so on. An old gag, that's stale enough now, and that, I dare say, you have heard many a time, boss. You can imagine all the rest, I dare say, and guess that I was flat enough to offer to find the needful for the trip.

'I had sent the better part of my gold to Melbourne by escort, but kept a great deal too much money by me. You see, I hadn't much sense in those days. I had close on £250 in notes and gold. It took near on £50 to get a horse and saddle, &c., for Tom, and a good stock of rations and other things; everything was very dear in those days. I had two horses of my own—one for saddle and one for pack. When it came to fixing up the swags he was all for leaving his tent behind, and making mine do for the two of us; but I didn't fancy this at all, as it was too small; and besides, I always made Jock come into the tent along with me at night; so it was settled to take both tents, and each of us pitch his own at night. And very thankful I ought to be we did, or else I should not be here to-night. I must now tell you that by this time my Jock had become a splendid beast; you could not have found his equal on the diggings. People often wondered at the way I had him trained to the whistle, which I always carried on me. He was something like your little dog in temper, and just exactly the same colour. He would not make friends with any one, and had a terrible "scunner" or dislike to Lawrence, who, I am sure, returned the feeling.

'So now, boss, you can amuse yourself fancying us all packed up ready for a start into the ranges, while I have a spell and a draw of the pipe.'

All the while Jim had been talking little Jock was perched upon the chair, ears cocked up, looking first at one, then at the other, and seeming to pay the greatest attention to the story; and it was amusing to me to notice that, quite involuntarily, Jim seemed to address himself as much to the dog as he did to me.

After a good smoke and a nip he started off again.

'It didn't take long from where we were to get into rough country, but before we camped for the first night I had made up my mind as to one of three things: either Tom was not very sure of his bearings, or he was foxing his track, or he was a very poor bushman. By foxing his track I mean trying to confuse me by doubling on his tracks, as to the actual direction and distance we had gone. This rather tickled my fancy, as I was always counted a first-rate bushman, and some of the Mudgee country is quite difficult enough to try a fellow's metal. I could have told him when we camped exactly the direction of our starting-point, and very close on how far it was off.

'That night I was a good deal disturbed; for, instead of coming into the tent as usual, Jock prowled round and round it nearly all night, and woke me twice by his fierce growling. The next

day the travelling was much of the same kind. Certainly we were getting well into the ranges, but we had gone over a lot of useless ground. At night again Jock repeated the same tactics. It was to have taken us only three days to get to the wonderful gully. Tom pretended he had gone astray a little, but we should be there early on the fourth, he was sure. That day, the third out, we crossed what Tom called two rivers, but which I knew to be the same stream which we had crossed and recrossed. It was, in fact, the Mitta Mitta, as I found out afterwards, and we had recrossed it not a very great distance below where the Omeo rush took place afterwards. In fact, I take it, from looking at the map afterwards—for I was never in that country again—that he was poking about in the country somewhere between Mr Wills and Mr Cooper, as they are now called on the maps, and not in the district at all that is known now as Gippsland proper.

'The third night passed off quietly enough, Jock still on the watch. In the morning Tom felt sure to strike the place that day. You'll bear in mind that since early in the first day there had been no track of any kind to follow, and the going in the ranges was very rough. This day it was worse than ever; but about noon, from the top of a high spur, I saw away to our left, nearly in a nor'-westerly direction, a queer-shaped hill, that I felt certain I had noticed on the second day; and then I knew to what an extent we had been travelling in circles, and that we weren't so very far from our starting-point either. There was no use in saying anything; it was natural enough for a chap who wasn't well used to the bush to get a bit mixed in such country; besides, if the worst happened, and he couldn't find his gully, I had noticed plenty of likely-looking country, and we might do worse than prospect it on our own hook. In the afternoon he got quite confident again.

"I have the right bearing now. See that high bluff with the great boulders piled up like a tower? Well, we ought to find what we want round the foot of that."

'He pushed on now quite briskly, and I remember thinking that he rode more like a man getting to a place he knew than to one of which he had only a description of the bearings. We were going up the bed of a good-sized creek, and an hour or so before sundown he turned sharply off into a widish gully running up to the big spur or bluff, and in which at a distance I could see traces of workings.

"Here we are," he said. "What do you think of me for a bush pilot?"

'Well, I thought very little of his piloting, but said nothing, and we started to camp. The horses, hobbled and belled, were turned up the gully—it was what you would call more of a flat than a gully—tents pitched, and a fire started. While the billy was boiling I strolled up the Flat to see how much work had been done, and found a good

deal more than I expected. About twenty shafts had been sunk, coming down the Flat on the far side. The water-course was on the side of our camp. They started near the top of the Flat, in about six feet of ground, getting deeper as they came down, till the bottom one, about seventy or eighty yards from the camp, was quite twenty feet deep. That evening we had a bit of a chat over the fire. Tom said he did not know where the best prospects had been got. "But we'll try all the shafts to-morrow; most likely the deepest ones are the best."

"Then he started the subject of Jock, who had been getting more cranky towards him every day, and was then crouched down by my side as close as he could get. He said I should have to chain Jock up if we wanted to do any work—that he would be frightened to move about with that great savage beast ready to fly at him any moment."

"This was right enough. I was a bit puzzled myself at Jock's behaviour; he didn't like any strangers, but I had never seen him go on with any one I had worked with before like he did with Tom; he never took his eyes off him for an instant, and watched his every movement, except when on horseback, and I felt all the time the dog could hardly keep from flying at the man's throat. So I said I would fix him up all right in the morning at the tents, which he had been used to guard."

"Before turning in I had a look round. The moon, near the full, was shining brightly, and the air felt sharp and frosty. It was about as wild a camp as I ever saw. The Flat was shut in by high ridges, and towards its head the big bluff loomed up, with the great masses of rock piled up one on the other, and glistening white in the moonlight, like an old giant's castle; though, for that matter, I never saw a castle in my life. The warrigals were tuning up all round, and their music don't ever sound very cheerful."

"Altogether I felt a bit queer and lonely that night, and was glad to roll into the blankets. I made Jock come inside the tent. He didn't want to, but I insisted; so in he came and lay down alongside me. He licked my face all over, rubbed his great hairy muzzle against my cheek, and whined softly. Poor old chap! He wanted badly to tell me something. So there I lay with the good dog's nose against my face, my arm over his neck, and tried to sleep, but it was no use for ever so long. I couldn't help thinking over the last few days. I felt certain now that all the story Tom had told me about how he came to hear of this spot was a fraud. As sure as I lay there, he had been here before. There was no deceiving a thorough bushman in that. The confident way he rode at the finish and many little things proved that to me. I thought our journey over carefully. I felt pretty sure that we weren't more than about forty miles as the crow flies from our start—say one long day's ride through

the mountains—and we had been four days knocking about in the ranges. What I couldn't settle was whether he could have come here straight at the first, or whether he had really got bushed. I know now all about it; he had been just pottering about, waiting for a chance to do for me at night, but Jock's watchfulness had saved me. You mustn't think I had any suspicions of anything wrong. I had never heard or read or dreamt of any such infernal villainy as the scoundrel lying in the other tent was hatching. It never even entered into my head to be uneasy about the money I had on me—a good £200, mostly in notes, which I carried in a pouch inside my shirt. At any rate I meant to have a look at the ground, and then tackle Tom straight, and make him own up what were his reasons for pitching me such a lot of lies. Then I fell asleep. Jock roused me by stretching and shaking himself, and I found it was close on sunrise, so I turned out. Tom was up; and telling him if he would get the billy boiled I would look up the horses, Jock and I turned up the Flat, where, just before falling asleep, I had heard their bells tinkling. We hadn't gone far when I spied the remains of an old camp, and had a look over it. There had been two good-sized tents, the poles still standing; and I could see that the chaps, whoever they had been, had started to get out timbers and laths for driving the ground, at the deeper shafts probably. The horses had not strayed far, and heading them well back down the gully, I got back to the camp for a bit of breakfast. I mentioned finding the other camp, and Tom gave himself straight away.

"Oh ay!" he said; "our old camp is just up the Flat."

"He looked up sharp to see if I had noticed the slip, but I pretended to be too busy pegging away at the beef and damper to mind anything else; but I was more determined than ever to have a good understanding with him by-and-by. After breakfast we got our tools ready, and I chained poor old Jock up to the tent. I had a terrible job with him to make him quiet. He whined and cried and pawed me, and tried so hard to be let free that I had to get Tom to go on ahead, out of his sight. Then I gave him a good scolding, showing him the whistle and making him lie down. He was too well trained to resist me when he saw I was in earnest, and gave in at last; but I couldn't help smiling when I thought of the bit of old rotten strap round his neck that he could snap like a bit of thread. As I turned away to follow Tom my faithful friend gave vent to some most mournful howls."

"I'm blowed if that dog of yours, Jim, wouldn't give a fellow the horrors. You'd think we were going to a funeral," Tom said, with a grin.

"Instead of starting at the lower shaft he turned up the Flat. 'Let us have a look at these top ones first.'"

"I have told you that these were the shallowest, and it stood to reason weren't any good, or they would have been worked. He was down two or three, and got out prospects which I panned out with the poorest results.

"Haden't we better tackle the deep shaft at once where they left off work?" I said.

"All right," he replied; "you have a turn below, and see if you can't drop on it rich; it's about here somewhere."

"It was plain to me if there was nothing in the lower shaft the whole thing was a duffer. This one, as I told you, was about twenty feet deep. There were a couple of logs along two sides of it, with a short log laid across them, but no signs of a windlass or of foot-holes to go down by. You know in those days diggers used to sink very great awkward holes, not like the neat shafts they do now, and this one was too wide for foot-holes. We had brought a piece of rope, which I made fast to the cross log; and dropping the pick and shovel in, I slipped down the rope. I noticed at a glance a bit of a drive about four feet in on the lower side and a few laths leaning over the entrance, when a slight noise made me look up, and I saw Tom whipping the rope up. He grinned down at me with an evil look, and it struck me then for the first time what an ill-looking dog he was.

"Hullo! what's that for?" I sang out.

"What's that for, my joker? Why, that's because you're trapped at last. Do you know where you are? Why, you're in your grave. A fine caper I've had with you and your blasted dog. I could have finished your job nights ago but for that brute, and been off with that roll of notes; it won't be in your shirt long now. I'll put the set on you, and then I'll finish him."

"I saw him stoop and rise with a great boulder in his hands.

"By instinct I jammed the shovel hard against the side of the shaft over my head; it turned the force of the blow, which beat me down on my knees. Before he could get another I squeezed my body into the drive. There was just room enough to get, as you may say, out of the line of fire, but not much to spare, and the laths, which

I kept in their place with the double end of my pick, helped to make the shelter better. He cursed and swore fearfully when he saw this—but there's no use in repeating his foul language; cursing and swearing is a thing I don't hold by at all—and stopped pelting down stones.

"You won't come out of that, you varmint?" he sneered. "All right, then; I'll earth you in. Won't take long to do that. You'll be quiet enough after a bit, when I come and dig you out; though it's a lot of trouble just for that bit of plunder. The air in that bit of a drive won't last you many minutes;" and with that he started to shovel back the earth into the shaft.

"God knows how I felt. I seemed quite stupefied—to have lost all power of thought. I could only call out silly prayers to the bloody-minded ruffian to spare me. He could have the money, the horses, anything, but for God's sake don't bury me alive! The rattle of the earth falling quickly down the shaft was his only reply. It helped to bring back my senses. I saw the earth rising fast up the mouth of the drive. As I crouched back in the little hollow my hand pressed against the big whistle round my neck. In a second it was at my lips, and with all my strength I blew a call, and well I knew, if Jock only heard it, that rotten strap wouldn't hold him long. Again I sounded it. Then a dread came over me; the way I was cramped in the drive and partly earthed up might deaden the sound. I must get out! I was desperate then. The villain had stopped shovelling at the first whistle-call. I think he was watching the dog. Never mind him. I forced myself fairly clear of the hole, and blew it again shrill and clear up the shaft. He turned sharply round. I saw him raise a great stone. I got my head and shoulders back in shelter in time, but not my foot (the left one). Down came the boulder, as big as your head, on it—fair on the instep. I felt something smash like pieces of tobacco-pipe, and gave a great scream; but I kept my senses, for mingling with my own cry I heard the dog's short angry barks, and knew he was loose, coming like the wind to rescue me. I pushed out of the drive and shouted to him; there came a fierce growl, and I saw the great hairy body flash over the shaft.

GOLD IN IRELAND.



WE are so accustomed to associate the occurrence of gold with California, Australia, and, in more recent times, with the Transvaal and British Columbia, that we are apt to overlook the fact that

in Ireland, close to our own doors, so to speak, where much of the land is supposed to be barren

and worthless in the ordinary sense, gold in considerable quantities has been picked up.

In the Dublin Science and Art Museum is the model of a gold nugget which was found in County Wicklow in 1795, the weight of the original lump of precious metal being no less than twenty-two ounces. The history of this and other nuggets, real and apocryphal, has recently been

traced by the perseverance of Mr V. Ball, F.R.S., and the story presents many features of interest.

According to one account the precious twenty-two ounce nugget itself was at one time in the possession of the Dublin Society, and was presented by one of the members to King George the Fourth when that monarch paid a visit to Ireland in 1821. Possibly that generous donor had in his mind a baronetcy or knighthood—for even sane persons will do funny things if they see the chance of getting a handle to their names.

This is, however, a most unlikely story on the face of it, for it can hardly be thought possible that a member of a learned society would be bold enough to give away that which did not belong to him, but was, in a manner, public property. Fancy a trustee of our British Museum presenting one of its treasures to the reigning sovereign, and fancy the absurdity of that sovereign accepting such a gift!

Another story has it that the wily king claimed the nugget as a *droit*, and there and then put it in his royal pocket; that a lady subsequently became possessed of it; and that she, not having any pronounced taste for the study of mineralogy, had it melted down and converted it into more marketable form.

Anyway, the Wicklow nugget was never seen again by mortal eye. The story of George the Fourth's acquisition of this gold was first circulated in 1833, twelve years after the ignoble transaction was supposed to have taken place; and we can imagine what a toothsome little bit of scandal it formed in the mouths of those whose political bias was not in favour of kingly rulers. But the story falls to pieces when the light of inquiry is turned upon it. Upon examination of the earlier catalogues of the mineral collection belonging to the Dublin Society, there is no mention whatever of the twenty-two ounce nugget; and we can hardly imagine that such an unique bit of treasure could be overlooked. Moreover, the keeper of the minerals notes that a large nugget had been found in Wicklow, and that the museum possessed only a model of it.

It seems, indeed, that there were two models of the nugget in the museum, and that two others are yet extant—one in the Geological Museum of Trinity College with a label which describes it as a 'model' (*sic*) of a piece of gold found at Croughan, and another belonging to a private collector.

There is certainly no trace of the lost nugget in the royal collections, and if George the Fourth ever possessed it he must have quickly got rid of it. It is more charitable to suppose that the story is a myth, for the king would hardly behave in such an undignified manner for the sake of such a paltry bit of treasure, nor would he be at all likely to put such a heavy lump into his pocket, however much he might have coveted it.

The origin of the story probably lies in the tradition that the Earl of Meath did once present the king with a small nugget as a curiosity.

It was in the year 1795 that the presence of gold in Wicklow first came as a surprise to the public. The metal had actually been detected some twelve years earlier, but the secret had been well kept, and a more profitable industry than that of rearing pigs and 'praties' had been carried on by a few families living at Croghan Kinshela, where most of the gold was found.

We can imagine with what joy this new source of wealth was greeted by the poverty-stricken peasantry—a treasure which needed no more apparatus for its acquirement than a discarded frying-pan with which to scoop up the gold-bearing mud from the river-bed. The few fortunate ones who held the secret of this Eldorado saw before them unlimited wealth; but the dream was soon to fade. Whether Pat became communicative in his cups, when in command of unaccustomed quantities of 'potheen,' or whether the purchasers of the gold let out the secret, is not known; but news of the Wicklow goldfields soon spread. According to Abraham Mills, who reported on the subject to Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society, these pioneer workers disposed of three thousand pounds' worth of gold in six weeks, which at three pounds fifteen shillings per ounce would give a total of eight hundred ounces of the precious metal.

The news of the gold-find no sooner got about than people from all parts flocked to Ireland, as to-day they are rushing to Klondyke. They swarmed round the gold-district like flies round a pot of honey. Prior claims were ignored, disorder was rife, and it was a case of every man for himself. If speedy action had not been taken by the authorities it is probable that the crowd would have fought like the famous Kilkenny cats until nothing remained but 'a tale which is told.' The Government stepped in, and by the aid of the Kildare militia took possession of the gold-washings on behalf of the Crown. Up till the time that the works were burnt down and the machinery destroyed after the Rebellion of 1798, over nine hundred ounces of gold had been found. The work was resumed in 1801, but soon after abandoned when it was found unprofitable.

Another alleged Irish nugget has a far more plebeian history than that to which the George the Fourth legend is attached. It was found by a tenant-farmer living at Ballycooge, and was used by him as a convenient weight with which to weigh his wool, until one day a pedlar calling at the house, and getting an inkling of its value, displayed much anxiety to purchase it. The owner was shrewd enough to suspect that it was worth more than the man offered, and refused to part with it. He, however, afterwards gave it to his landlord, whether in quittance of rent or not never transpired; the landlord gave it to

the Earl of Meath, and the Earl presented it to the Dublin Society's Museum.

Perhaps it was the same nugget which was, according to a statement made at a meeting of the Royal Geological Society of Ireland in January 1865, found by a family named Byrne, farmers at Croghan Kinshela some thirty years previously, and supposed to be copper. This nugget was picked up in the river-bed, and weighed eighteen ounces. After the farm people had used it as a weight for several years they sold it to a travelling tinker, who in his turn made a big profit out of the transaction.

There is a third story of a nugget being used as a weight told in the *Hibernian Magazine*. In this case a yarn-dealer used the nugget as a two-pound weight for ten years—which, of course, is no proof that it weighed two pounds. He believed it to be copper ore, but eventually sold it for a considerable sum.

Probably these stories belong really to the same lump of gold, for we all know how tales repeated from mouth to mouth—as these must have been—over many a peat fire, are unlike rolling stones in gathering many additions and variations.

In the already-mentioned report to Sir Joseph Banks there is reference to a gold nugget which weighed five ounces; this also has disappeared from mortal ken, together with others which weighed six, seven, and nine ounces respectively. But we are on surer ground when we refer to a nugget of four ounces eight pennyweight, for in 1844 this was actually shown by the Mining Company of Ireland at a Dublin Exhibition. By a printer's error in one of the journals of the day the weight of this nugget was given as forty ounces,

a mistake which was repeated by others, and which led to this piece of gold being known as the 'Champion Nugget of the United Kingdom.' It will raise a smile when it is stated that this nugget was as unfortunate as the others: it was stolen from the Exhibition, and was never seen or heard of again. Many other nuggets of undoubted Irish origin have been found, and we may assume that the majority of them have been disposed of secretly. Some, however, remain, and can be viewed by the curious in such matters. There are five in the Museum at Edinburgh, their weights varying from one hundred to twenty-eight grains—rather a coming down, it will be thought, from the lumps of gold which have so mysteriously disappeared.

There are also in the Museum of Practical Geology in Jermyn Street, London, seven pieces of Wicklow gold, the largest of which weighs about one ounce. A peculiarity of this Wicklow gold is that, instead of the metal being embedded in the quartz, as is generally the case with Californian and Australian nuggets, the quartz is often found encased in the gold.

Stories of big Hibernian nuggets have a legendary air about them, but that a considerable amount of the precious metal was washed from the soil by the peasantry at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century is an undisputed fact. It will be remembered that gold in Scotland has been worked quite recently, especially in Sutherlandshire and Lanarkshire, and in Wales in the Dolgelly district. The 13,266 tons of ore raised in the United Kingdom in 1895 yielded 6600 ounces of gold of a value of £18,520. Who knows, therefore, how much gold may yet lie undiscovered in the Wicklow Hills?

STRAY RECOLLECTIONS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.



BOOKS of recollections and reminiscences have an unfailing charm for a large section of the reading public, especially if spiced with anecdotes of famous or exalted persons. When an old stager crosses his legs and gets into a reminiscent mood, and begins 'I remember,' he secures general attention, if his recollections are genuinely interesting, and not too prosy and long drawn out. As Browning has it:

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain;
And did he stop and speak to you,
And did you speak to him again?
How strange it seems and new!

As the number of those who have seen and talked with Sir Walter Scott is yearly lessening, we make no apology for handing on the following anecdotes:

Dr Edward C. Robertson, Otterburn, writes: 'My father (the late Dr John Argyll Robertson) some

fifty years ago told me that once, whilst visiting a patient in George Street, Edinburgh, the gentleman requested him to accompany him to his bedroom, where he would show him the greatest sight to be seen in Scotland. On entering the bedroom he was taken to the window, which looked across upon Castle Street. On a table a hand was seen writing with the greatest rapidity on sheet after sheet of paper. As each sheet was finished it was thrown on the floor. The hand so seen was the hand of Sir Walter Scott, the great Wizard of the North, engaged in writing one of his wonderful novels.'

It was during excursions into Liddesdale with his friend Robert Shortreed that Scott encountered James Davidson of Millburnholm, who, if he did not sit for the complete portrait of 'Dandie Dinmont' in *Guy Mannering*, at least supplied some of its features. Dr Robertson says: 'In 1851 I was practising at Otterburn,

in Northumberland, which lies in the valley of the Rede, and under the pleasant shade of the green Cheviots. One day I met at a cottage on the watershed betwixt the Rede and the Coquet a nice middle-aged lady, who, in course of conversation, informed me that she was a niece of the prototype (Davidson) of the famous Borderer of Sir Walter Scott's creation, "Dandie Dinmont." Her uncle, when informed that he was the "original" from whom "Dandie" was fashioned, said, "I wish to goodness that hirpling auld body wad only come again this way; I wad thrash his neck for him."

Mr W. S. Black, of Meerumborah, Bega, New South Wales, sends us a few early recollections of his boyhood in Edinburgh. One day Scott was pointed out to him coming along Thistle Street as a boys' school had just been let loose, when a bright, curly-headed fellow tumbled against him. He laid his hand on the boy's laughing, curly head, gave him a good look and a pat, and let him run off. This was in 1820. This same lad also saw Scott seated in his study in Castle Street, writing with great rapidity, and pitching the finished sheets on the floor. Of Sir Walter Scott's eldest son, who died on his way home from India in 1847, Mr Black writes: 'My regiment was stationed at Arcot, Madras Presidency. There had been a mutiny in my corps while at Jubbulpore; the mutineers were brought down to Arcot and tried. Some were sentenced to be shot; and, to make sure of no fresh outbreak at the execution, a battery of Horse Artillery and a couple of squadrons of the 15th Hussars, under the command of Sir Walter Scott, came from Bangalore to keep order. Sir Walter, in full hussar uniform, with his imposing figure, and mounted on a splendid jet-black Arab horse, seemed to me just what 'Ravenswood' in the *Bride of Lammermoor* should have looked. He was indeed a noble-looking man.'

Sir John Cowan, of Edinburgh, recently alluded in public to his first meeting with Sir Walter when he was a boy in the fourth class of the High School. At that time his (Sir John's) father was living in Moray House, and one afternoon they were walking together up the Canon-gate, when they met a man, not tall, but very lame, and leaning heavily on his walking-stick, and very shabbily dressed. His father and the stranger shook hands, and remained in conversation for some ten minutes, he (Sir John) meanwhile standing by their side. At that time his father was a trustee on the estate of Constable and Co., of which, unfortunately, Sir Walter was a partner. When Sir Walter and his father had ceased their conversation his father introduced him to Sir Walter, remarking that he was at the High School. 'Oh,' replied Sir Walter, shaking him heartily by the hand, 'you are at the High School? A very excellent institution that. I hope you are a very diligent student.'

Some three years later, when he was a student at Bonn University, on the Rhine, he happened one afternoon to be waiting the arrival of the steamer, on board which he expected to find his two sisters. On the steamer coming up to the pier he found his two sisters and an elderly gentleman, apparently near his end, sitting on a chair, and watched over by a daughter. This was poor Sir Walter Scott on his way home to Abbotsford to die. The previous year the Government had sent him out in one of their own vessels to Malta and Rome; and, after spending the winter at Rome, he was now on his way home. It was a sad sight, and yet it was pleasant to know that Sir Walter was so cared for in the last journey of his life.

THE OLD PIANO.

NAY, Maidie, have sweet patience yet awhile;
Your full-toned Erard or your Bechstein grand
Will come ere long. The mute companionship
Of old for old, how can you understand?

To Time's forgotten lumber-room it soon
Shall go. For yet a little let it stay
Just where it stood when threescore years gone by
Across the threshold on a sweet spring day

I brought her home who made my life a joy
Those yellow shrunken keys were gleaming white,
That faded silk was brightest emerald;
With unshed tears of joy her eyes were bright;

And home was heaven when there she sat and played
The simple harmonies that fittest seemed
To suit the simple air, the tender words,
That written were for her and me, we deemed.

I see her now, so proudly in her arms
Holding her first-born boy, and glancing round
With tender triumph when the little hands
Alone had made a feebly jangling sound.

And oh! those merry days, those bygone days,
When in the twilight pitter-patter went
The little feet to merriest music, when
With childish trebles her low tones were blent.

Those days had gone, and we were growing old,
Though you were still unthought of, Maidie mine,
When one we deemed the fairest of our flock
Sang to us in the voice we thought divine:

A slender figure in her snowy gown,
A white camellia in her auburn hair;
So winning in her youthful grace, we thought
'Surely in all the world she is most fair.'

Ah! soon the sun was blotted from our sky,
Hushed was the music, gone the laughter gay.
Like a pure lily, 'midst camellias white,
Silent, yet smiling, our sweet darling lay.

Nay, Maidie—while in lingering caress
I still can draw this wrinkled, feeble hand
Across its yellow keys, in memory of
Those other hands that touched it—let it stand.

MARY J. CROWK.